

Obituary.

SIR WILLIAM OSLER, Bt., M.D., F.R.S., F.R.C.P.,

Regius Professor of Medicine in the University of Oxford.

THE death of Sir William Osler on December 29th—within six months of the celebration of his 70th birthday—has caused a deep sense of personal sorrow throughout the medical profession of two continents. He had been ill for more than two months, but the end came quickly.

William Osler was the sixth son of the Rev. Featherstone Lake Osler and Ellen Free, daughter of Thomas Pickton, of London. One of his brothers is Sir E. B. Osler, a member of the Dominion House of Commons and a director of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and another is Judge Osler, who was a justice of appeal, Ontario. The Oslers were a Falmouth family, shipowners and merchants, and the father was born there in 1803. Subsequently he went to Canada as a missionary, and eventually became Rector of Ancaster and Dundas, Ontario (1857-93).

Early Days.

William Osler was born at Bond Head, Ontario, on July 12th, 1849. He told us in his address on Sir Thomas Browne that it was his good fortune as a boy to come under the influence of a parish priest of the Gilbert White type, who followed the seasons of nature no less ardently than those of the Church, and whose excursions into science brought him into contact with physic and physicians. Faber Johnson, as his friends loved to call him, founder and Warden of the Trinity College School, Weston, near Toronto, illustrated that angelical conjunction of medicine and divinity more common in the sixteenth century than in the nineteenth. It was he who first introduced William Osler to the *Religio Medici*, a copy of which acquired then, the second book he ever bought, was always the most precious in his library. From it came subtle influences which gave stability to character and helped to a sane outlook in the complex problems of life. The thoughts of Browne, and those also of Marcus Aurelius and Epictetus grew to be his thoughts; conscientious devotion to duty and deep human interest in human beings became his master thoughts thus early in life. William Arthur Johnson was one of the three teachers—Dr. James Bovell of Toronto and Dr. Palmer Howard of Montreal being the other two—to whom he dedicated his *Principles and Practice of Medicine*, and to whom he owed his success in life, if success means getting what you want and being satisfied with it. From school he went to Trinity College School of Medicine, and in 1870 to McGill University, Montreal, where he graduated in 1872.

In the summer of 1872, after a short tour—Dublin, Glasgow, and Edinburgh—he settled at the Physiological Laboratory, University College, with Professor Burdon-Sanderson, where he spent fifteen months working at histology and physiology. At the hospital he saw in full swing the "admirable" English system, with the ward work done by the student himself the essential feature, and though not a regular student of the hospital he had many opportunities of seeing William Jenner and Wilson Fox, and his notebooks contained many precepts of these "model clinicians." From Ringer, Bastian, and Tilbury Fox he learnt how attractive out-patient teaching could be made—Ringer he always felt had missed his generation, and suffered from living in advance of it. The autumn of 1873 was spent in Berlin, where he had his first introduction to the medical clinic on a large scale, on which he was to model his own clinic at Johns Hopkins Hospital. There he studied under Frerichs, Hoffmann, Riess, Ewald, and Traube. The last named made a great impression on him as an ideal physiological clinician. The first five months of 1874 were spent in Vienna in the clinics of Hebra, Bamberger, and Widerhoffer. In Bamberger he found another ideal clinician.

Montreal.

When he returned to Montreal in September, 1874, the Chair of the Institutes of Medicine was vacant, and he found that the Faculty had, with some hardihood, appointed him, a young and untried man, to it, instead of to the demonstratorship as he hoped. With the appointment he had the "ghastly task" of delivering four systematic lectures a week for the winter session, and from this period dated his ingrained hostility to this type of

teaching. His colleagues at the Montreal General Hospital placed the *post-mortem* department at his disposal, and pathology became his chief interest. He then began that extensive experience of this subject which formed the basis of his future successful career as a physician and teacher. He was appointed physician to the small-pox wards of the Montreal General Hospital in 1875, and in 1878 honorary physician to the hospital. On the day of his election he left for London to take the Membership of the Royal College of Physicians and to work at clinical medicine. For three months he had a delightful clinical experience, attending the ward visits of several London physicians. Murchison he described as a model bedside teacher, Gee as one in whom were combined the spirit of Hippocrates and the method of Sydenham. Fred. Roberts showed how physical diagnosis could be taught. In the summer of 1879 he had his own first clinical class, working with his students through Gee's *Auscultation and Percussion*. The next five years passed in teaching physiology and pathology in the winter session and clinical medicine in the summer. In 1884 he spent four months in Germany, chiefly at Leipzig, working at pathology with Weigert and clinical medicine with Wagner.

Philadelphia.

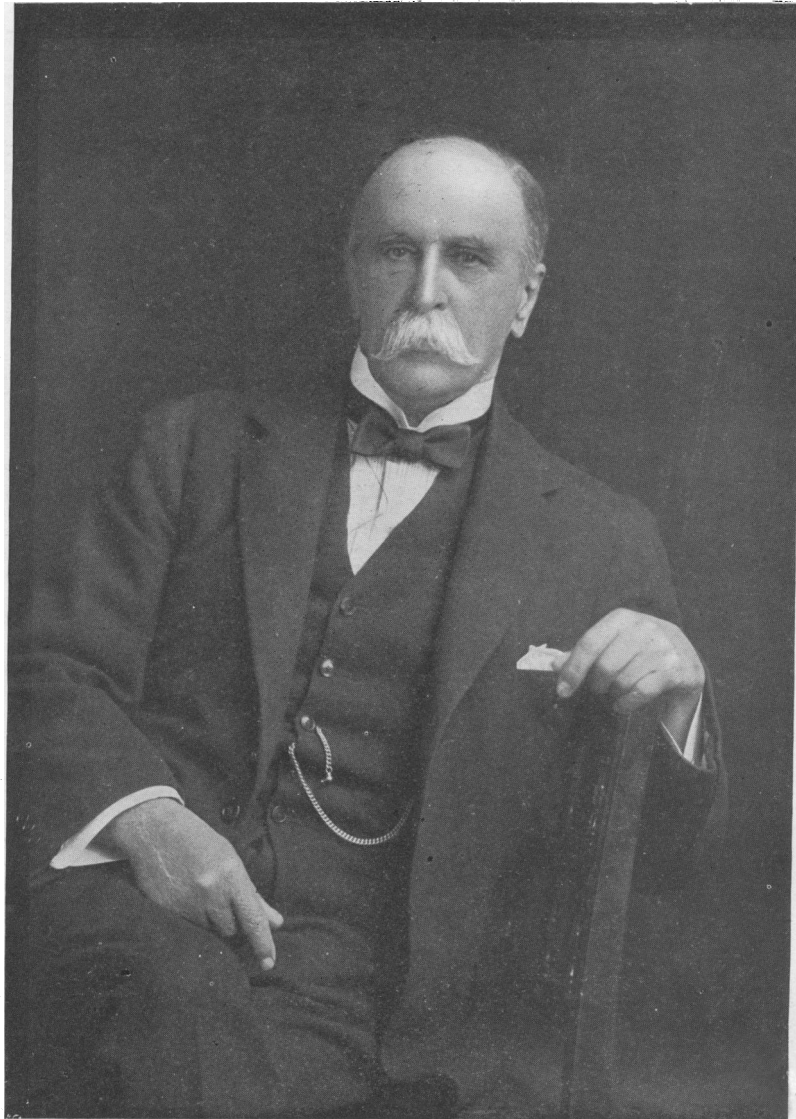
His reputation as an inspiring, keen, and successful teacher, his character as a man, his attracting personality, and his enthusiasm for hard work, were known and appreciated far beyond Montreal, and after ten years there he was, in 1884, appointed to the chair of clinical medicine in the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, then the premier medical school in the States, in succession to Dr. William Pepper. The invitation to the chair reached him whilst he was in Leipzig, and he treated it first as a practical joke, one in retaliation for similar efforts on his own part, and for a time did not reply. It was, however, serious enough, and he accepted it, leaving Montreal "a rich man, not in worldly goods, for such I have the misfortune—or the good fortune—lightly to esteem, but rich in the goods which neither rust nor moth have been able to corrupt—friendship, good fellowship, wider experience, and fuller knowledge."

Johns Hopkins.

At Philadelphia, as everywhere, teaching work was his first care, and hospitals and medical societies absorbed the greater part of his time; he lived the peaceful life of a student with students, who were the inspiration of his life and of his work. The teaching there was by lectures and the theatre clinic. Ward classes for physical diagnosis were held, but clinical clerks were unknown, and theoretical lectures occupied a large share of the student's time. Osler broke new ground there by starting a small clinical laboratory. After five years at Philadelphia he was elected to the chair of the Principles and Practice of Medicine in the Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, and physician to the Johns Hopkins Hospital. That hospital was by the will of the founder to form part of the Medical School, and be an institution for the study as well as the cure of disease. Osler had been appointed early enough to take part in the organization of the clinical work and teaching, and thus had a leading share in establishing, for the first time in an English-speaking country, a hospital embodying the principle of hospital units, each in charge of a director. The day after he accepted office he met Dr. Gilman, President of the Johns Hopkins University, at the Fifth Avenue Hotel, New York, so that they could study the management of the hotel, there being, in Dr. Gilman's opinion, no great difference between the general management of a hotel and a hospital. They found that each department of the hotel had a responsible head, and over all a director; on this plan were modelled the arrangement and management of the hospital units. The university had not sufficient funds to open a medical school at the time, and so for several years post-graduate teaching alone was conducted there. Osler thought this a fortunate circumstance, for it gave time to complete its organization. There was nothing in his life in which he took greater pride than his connexion with the organization of the hospital, and with the introduction of English methods of practical instruction. He desired no other epitaph than the statement that he taught medical students in the wards. He firmly believed in the value to a university of the publication, even at a

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Grassmann
H. Osler

Photo. Elliott and Fry.

monetary loss to it, of original work carried out in its schools, and he used to say that the Johns Hopkins *Reports* and *Bulletin*, issued in connexion with its medical school, had amply repaid the university for the money and trouble expended on them. When he went to Johns Hopkins his ambition was to build up a great clinic where the professor should have an organized body of assistants and house-physicians, and where the student should be taught not by didactic lectures, but in the wards and the laboratory.

Influence on Medical Education.

He was never a whole-time professor, and even in 1914 he was not in favour of the whole-time clinical teacher, because his life had been largely spent in association with his professional brethren, participating in the many interests they had in common. At the same time he confessed that he mistrusted his own judgement on this point, as it was a problem for young men and for the future.

He described his own method of conducting clinical teaching before the Abernethian Society, St. Bartholomew's Hospital, in 1913. The detailed ramifications of his teaching are remarkable. An essential feature of it was that students were set tasks of seeking information on any point of interest that cropped up in the class, the teacher telling them in what books to look for it, and they had to report to the class at a subsequent meeting.

Osler was an excellent clinical observer, and he attributed most of his success in this to his thorough grounding in the results of disease which he gained as pathologist at Montreal. He did a great deal of original work himself, and he had the happy faculty of inspiring others with his own enthusiasm for original investigation, and his charming personality and manner attached to him in the course of his life hundreds of young men who thought it a great honour and gain to them to be allowed to work for or with him. He always gave proper credit for work done by others, whenever and wherever it was due, and never forgot his assistants.

He had three ideals: "To do the day's work well and not bother about to-morrow; to act on the Golden Rule towards his professional brethren and patients; and to cultivate a measure of equanimity to enable him to bear success with humility, affection of friends without pride, and to be ready when the day of sorrow and grief came to meet it with courage befitting a man." The first of these ideals he elaborated in his address to Yale students, 1913, and published in small pocket-book form as *A Way of Life*.

Oxford.

When Sir John Burdon-Sanderson, the Regius Professor of Medicine at Oxford, resigned in 1904 the graduates of the University met and expressed the opinion that the new occupant of the chair should be a physician representative of medicine in its widest sense. Dr. Burdon Sanderson had previously been Waynflete Professor of Physiology and apparently could not be described in the terms of the graduates' resolution, and when finally Dr. Osler accepted the chair (1905) it was universally agreed that Oxford had obtained such a man as it hoped for. It may be noted here that he had been elected a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians in 1883 and a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1898.

The reasons why he gave up work into which he entered heart and soul were given by himself subsequently (BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL, January 3rd, 1914, p. 16):

I know how hard it is "to serve God and Mammon," to try to do one's duty as a teacher and to live up to the responsibility of a large department, and at the same time to meet the outside demands of your brethren and of the public. And if added to this you have an active interest in medical societies, and in the multifarious local and general problems, the breaking-point may be reached. I had had thirty-one years of uninterrupted hard work. William Pepper, my predecessor in Philadelphia, died of angina at 55; John Musser, my successor, of the same disease at 53! After listening to my story you may wonder how it was possible to leave a place so gratifying to the ambitions of any clinical teacher: I had had a good innings and was glad to get away without a serious breakdown.

For the following estimate of Sir William Osler's influence in Oxford we are indebted to Dr. CHARLES SINGER:

"Perhaps only those who have known the medical school at Oxford both before and after Osler's arrival can estimate fully the change wrought by his personality, not

only in the mechanism, but in the whole spirit. Among Osler's predecessors in the chair at Oxford have been men of the very highest scientific distinction, but few or none had that kind of knowledge which comes of a long life of clinical teaching and of a wide experience of a variety of medical schools. This was Osler's special asset, and it was associated in him with actual scientific attainments and humanistic sympathies that have probably not been found in combination to a like degree in any one medical teacher since the days of Boerhaave.

"When Osler first came to Oxford medicine was indeed recognized by the university both by reason of the antiquity of the endowments that existed to promote it and because it was generally allowed to be a part of the *organon* of knowledge. But the school was exiguous in dimensions and in many ways cut off from other departments of university activity. There was thus very little temptation to select Oxford in preference to other medical schools, and a large proportion of its students—and these among the most gifted—were men who came to medicine not as a first choice but after having completed a course in some other faculty. Excellent work was done in Oxford in those days under the most difficult conditions, but it is no injustice to a bygone system to say that in the nature of the case it could attract only the few.

"With the advent of Osler all this was changed. First, his own manifold attainments provided a natural link with other departments. His enthusiasm for learning was, from his first settling in Oxford until his last public utterance, exerted in the direction of bringing the great resources of medical history, in the widest sense, into relation with the general cultural stream. This movement, he clearly saw, could not fail to react on the status and attainments of medical men as a whole. He had himself been the witness of so many changes in the practice of medicine, and his own thoughts and education had been so deeply tinged with the reflections of the past, that it was natural, in the eventide of his life, that he should turn so largely to tempering visions of what might be with musings on what had been. This extraordinary range of intellectual interests it was that chiefly marked him out, and gave him his supreme quality—judgement. It is for the degree to which he possessed this quality, rather than as a pioneer or investigator, that posterity will remember him, as it remembers his great prototype Boerhaave. Not that either of these men lacked scientific powers or failed of scientific achievement. But it was their power of judgement, drawn, on the one hand, from great stores of experience and, on the other hand, from great powers of vision, that gave them their quality as teachers and as inspirers of others, and their insight as physicians. It was certainly this that was the primary source of Osler's influence at Oxford.

"As soon as Osler came to Oxford he recognized the need of bringing the academic teaching of medicine more fully into touch with the realities of practice. He not only threw all his weight into the adequate development of the departments of pathology and physiology, but he immediately discerned the need and the possibility of an extension there of clinical teaching. He saw that Oxford, a town of between 50,000 and 60,000 inhabitants, could not be a very great clinical school, but he knew from practical experience the special value that an academic atmosphere may give to clinical instruction and the value also that comes from an intensive study of material—a method either difficult or impossible in many busier centres. He thus succeeded in linking up scientific investigation and clinical experience. Nor will this method disappear with his direct influence, for he has inspired and left behind him a number of younger and distinguished exponents who will carry on his tradition.

"Osler was gifted with those peculiar qualities of heart as well as of head that made it always seem to those in his company that their own interests were his also; but the seeming was something more than a mere appearance—it was a reality. It may have seemed that in his later years his interests moved predominantly in the direction of literary and historical pursuits. This element in his character was, however, a new thing, and was a development that comes to many as experience grows in richness and variety. It arose in him, at least, from none of that failure of the forward looking power that goes with age, but rather from something that is almost its opposite. He seemed to have a great sense of continuity, and this

gave rise, on the one hand, to his love of antiquity, especially as expressed in the historical method, and, on the other hand, to his love of young people, and his constant desire to have active and moving minds around him. He was no mere antiquarian. It was the living past that appealed to him, the past that he traced in the present and foresaw in the future. For such a spirit Oxford was an ideal home: Oxford with its inexhaustible store of ancient memories and its young and progressive medical school, Oxford with the researches of its scholars and its scientists going on endlessly side by side. Into the heart of this complex place Osler did not creep but leapt, and became at once a part and parcel of it, influenced by it and loving it, but never losing his own rich and complex personality that had been moulded by other forces of which, as yet, Oxford knew but little.

"And so it came about that he retained in Oxford just those powers of making his surroundings react to him that had been discerned in him in other and less conservative environment. This was the secret of his power, and this it was which enabled him to raise the Medical School at Oxford to the position that it now occupies."

Mr. R. W. CHAPMAN, assistant secretary of the Clarendon Press, tells us that Sir William Osler became a Delegate of the Oxford University Press in 1905, and was recently made a Perpetual Delegate in the room of Dr. Sanday. "His immense knowledge," Mr. Chapman continues, "and great influence, his antiquarian tastes and bibliographical love, made his help and counsel of great value to an institution which has its roots in the past and claims its place in the forefront of modern research. Osler's name will always be connected with the *Quarterly Journal of Medicine*, the publication of which by the University Press was due to his initiative. It is not so well known how much the series of Oxford Medical Publications, which began during his tenure of office, owed to his constant care and wise direction. The Press has in preparation *A Physician's Anthology*, a collection of verse made by some of his friends in his honour. All who are connected with the Press deplore that what was designed as a gift can now be no more than a memorial. His loss will be felt as a real blow, the more so as it follows immediately on the untimely death of Mr. Charles Cannan, who, as Secretary to the Delegates, had worked with Osler for many years."

Writings.

No attempt could be made here to enumerate his many writings, beginning in 1872 with reports in the *Canadian Medical and Surgical Journal* of cases in the wards of the Montreal General Hospital. The bibliography given in the July number of the *Johns Hopkins Hospital Bulletin*, which celebrated his 70th birthday, contained 730 titles of books and articles by him during the forty-nine years 1870-1919. His chief book, *The Principles and Practice of Medicine*, made its first appearance in 1892, and at once had an enormous success not only with students but with medical men in all English-speaking countries. Many editions were called for, and each was carefully revised to keep it abreast of the progress of knowledge. An eighth edition appeared in 1916. He was the editor, with Dr. Thomas McCrae, of a *System of Medicine* in several volumes. In 1889 he wrote on the cerebral palsies of children, and in 1897 on angina pectoris and allied states. In addition to his very numerous writings on clinical and pathological subjects, he from time to time delighted the profession by an address on some subject in the borderland of medicine and literature or science. In one of these he urged the student to allot a portion of each day to books not connected with medicine. "Before going to sleep read for half an hour, and in the morning have a book on your dressing table. You will be surprised to find how much can be accomplished in the course of a year." He himself found recreation in biography, and had a strong conviction of its value in education. He often chose a biography for the subject of an address, and a series were collected in the volume entitled the *Alabama Student and other Biographical Essays*, published in 1908. The subjects chosen for the biographies in this volume were nearly all medical men: John Keats, the apothecary poet, John Lock as a physician, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sir Thomas Browne. Those who knew the boyish side

of Osler's nature can realize the zest with which he hunted out the story of the buccaneering expedition in which Thomas Dover, physician and buccaneer, was third in command, an expedition which found Robinson Crusoe in 1710, and finally realized the enormous sum of £170,000. Osler's love of history came out even in his *Principles and Practice of Medicine*, where he gave an account of the origin and growth of knowledge of the various diseases, and mentioned the men who had pieced it together. Perhaps of his occasional addresses that which best revealed his learning and sense of fun was that on "The Old Humanities and the New Science," which he delivered to a meeting of the Classical Association at Oxford in May, 1919. Its publication in our columns on July 5th, 1919, gave great and abiding pleasure to thousands of readers.

Osler loved the society of young people, and knew well how to gain their confidence. His cheery optimism appealed to them, and when he visited a large hospital he delighted to get into the common room and chat about anything and everything—and there were few matters about which Osler did not know something. He would confess that he found this association with young men very helpful to a teacher, and that he believed that it not only enabled him to understand their ideas and difficulties, but kept the teacher himself from stereotyping his mind. He was, when the subject needed it, an impressive speaker, but his lighter utterances and after-dinner speeches were full of humour, wit, and broad fun.

Honours.

He received many honours. He was made a baronet at the time of the coronation of King George V; he was honorary professor of medicine in Johns Hopkins University; he received the honorary degree of D.Sc. from the universities of Oxford, Cambridge, Dublin, Liverpool, and Leeds, that of LL.D. from the universities of McGill, Toronto, Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Yale, Harvard, and Johns Hopkins, and the D.C.L. from the universities of Durham and Trinity, Toronto. He was a foreign associate of the Academy of Medicine, Paris, and received the honorary degree of M.D. from the university of Christiania. On July 11th, 1919—the day before his 70th birthday—he was presented, in the name of a large number of subscribers, with a collection of essays in two volumes, written by some 150 representative members of the profession on both sides of the Atlantic. The presentation was made by his "brother of Cambridge," who said that the occasion was one anniversary of many years of supreme service in two kindred nations and for the world. "But while thus," Sir Clifford Allbutt continued, "we celebrate your leadership in the relief of sickness and adversity, we are far from forgetting the sunnier theme—the debt, none the less, which we owe to you in other fields of thought. In you we see the fruitfulness of the marriage of science and letters, and the long inheritance of a culture which, amid the manifold forms of life, and through many a winter and summer, has survived to inspire and adorn a civilization which so lately has narrowly escaped the fury of the barbarian." In a moving reply, Sir William Osler spoke of himself "loving our profession and believing ardently in its future; I have been content to live in it and for it," and added characteristically, "Nothing in my career has moved me more, pleased me more, than to have received letters from men at a distance; men I have never seen in the flesh, who have written to me as a friend."

Sir William Osler married in 1892 the eldest daughter of the late John Revere of Massachusetts, and great grand-daughter of Paul Revere. Their only child, a son, who was born in 1896, died in France, 1917, from wounds received in battle.

The Last Years.

To Dr. ARTHUR THOMSON, Professor of Human Anatomy at Oxford, we are indebted for the following note of Osler's life and influence in Oxford, and of his death:

"In 1905 Osler came to Oxford with a great reputation. That he has lived up to it, and given us of his best, is attested by the affection which his memory invokes. After the strenuous hustle of American life, the rest and calm of Oxford appealed to him. It is pleasant to know that the years spent here were amongst the happiest of his life. The surroundings were such as he delighted in, the society

was congenial, and the duties of his office, not overburdensome, were such as to give him ample scope for his activities, and free play for his broad outlook on life.

"Gifted with a remarkable memory, and equipped with an almost limitless experience, he never seemed to forget anything he had either seen or read. He had a marvellous power of marshalling facts and getting at the essentials. Quick to realize the ever-changing needs of the times, he was always in the forefront of progress. There was a brightness and sparkle about his views which won approval and disarmed opposition. At a meeting, whenever Osler was in the chair, the proceedings were never dull, and business was usually expeditiously transacted. He had clear views as to what he wanted, and generally got his way, and, as it here recorded, his way was usually the best way.

"Of a nature most generous and kind, he was ever mindful of the trials and sorrows of others. Many will there be this day who remember with loving affection the comforting words with which he soothed their sore-tried hearts. To those engaged in the struggle of life he was full of encouragement, wise counsel, and often substantial aid. Even of the failures in life he had always something good to say. With qualities such as these can it be wondered at that he endeared himself to all who were fortunate enough to be of his acquaintance. We in Oxford know it, and now cherish the memory of his sympathetic personality.

"His delight was in books; he was never happier than when showing some recently acquired treasure. Much of his leisure was spent in the Bodleian, of which he was a curator, and his expert advice was of invaluable service to the Delegates of the Clarendon Press.

"By virtue of his office he was Master of the quaint old almshouses at Ewelme, Oxfordshire. Nothing gave him greater pleasure than to whisk off by motor car a party of American visitors, there possibly for the first time, to introduce them to the beauties of this most picturesque of English villages; it remains as a lasting memory to many who were privileged to make the visit.

"Of his work in the Medical School what need be said that is not known? He cheered us by his breezy presence, and left us all the heartier with some quaint quip or jest. None the less, he was alert and observant, and oftentimes we benefited by some shrewd remark or friendly criticism. It was around the Radcliffe Infirmary that his activities mainly centred; he was largely instrumental in getting the new Clinical Laboratory built there, and much of his time was devoted to the introduction of appropriate clinics in that institution.

"The war told badly on Sir William. Like many others, he lost his only son; it hit him hard, but he never winced. As he said to me, 'Ours is a common sorrow; we must think of others as well as ourselves.' In consequence he immersed himself in duties innumerable, particularly in connexion with the hospitals under Canadian and American control. He was always responsive to the appeal of friends from abroad who were anxious to obtain news of their wounded sons. This often entailed long and tedious journeys, and the strain told on him; he was a worn and tired man.

"When peace came, bringing with it the brighter outlook, he began to pick up; and when, this autumn, he returned from a holiday in the Channel Islands, he was a new man, with all the old vitality back again; for it appears that under the genial influence of the Jersey climate, with boyish glee, he had been indulging in all sorts of acrobatic performances, such as standing on his head and turning cartwheels on the sands—wonderful feats for a man of 70. Accordingly we were all buoyed up by the hope that our Regius had still many years of active life before him.

"Called in consultation to Glasgow, he was caught by the railway strike; he managed to get as far south as Newcastle, and there he was held up. Anxious to get home, he undertook the long motor journey to Oxford. He arrived a sick man, and, despite the care and attention of those who tended him so lovingly and long, he passed away with the fading light on the afternoon of December 29th. 'Gone west' as he would have wished, for he often talked of the land of his birth and adoption."

Sir William Osler was a student (fellow) of Christ Church, and the funeral service was to be held at Christ Church Cathedral on the afternoon of New Year's day.

CHARLES LOUIS TAYLOR.

Formerly Assistant Editor of the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL.

It was a sad group that assembled at St. Mary's, Kensal Green, on the morning of Christmas Eve, when Charles Louis Taylor—who was for over thirty years on the staff of the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL, and for twenty years Assistant Editor—was laid to rest. He died on Sunday, December 21st, aged 70.

He was the only child of Dr. Charles Taylor, of Peterhead, Aberdeenshire, who died at the age of 24 of cholera contracted when attending victims of the epidemic in the neighbouring village of Boddam. His widow went with her infant son to reside in France, and he first went to school at Noyon. At the age of 6, speaking only French, he returned to Scotland, and was sent as a pupil to the Reverend Dr. Kemp at Dufftown. At the age of 11 he was promoted to Blairs' College, Aberdeen, and during his four years there received a thorough grounding in the classics. He was transferred in 1864 to the Scots College, Valladolid, where he remained four or five years. He would sometimes speak of his experiences there—the rigid discipline, homely fare, and the continuous study of ancient learning, Latin being the colloquial language. It was during this period, however, that his acquaintance with English literature, which eventually became wide and deep, began. Finding that he had no vocation for the priesthood, he returned to this country with the intention of entering the Indian Civil Service, but when he applied was a few months over age. After a few years, during which he spent much time in France reviving his knowledge of French, he determined to follow his father's profession and entered the medical school of University College, London, in October, 1873. He was a good student, reserved, but greatly liked by his few intimates, as well as by those members of the staff who got to know him. He passed through the whole curriculum with credit, and held the usual students' appointments, but could never be induced to sit for an examination and never qualified. He acted as house surgeon to Mr. Berkeley Hill at University College Hospital for four or five months and held several other temporary appointments there. His upbringing had given him a colloquial command of French, Spanish, and Latin; he had a working knowledge of Greek, Italian, and Portuguese, and later on taught himself to read German. These linguistic attainments were to serve him well.

In 1880 he became secretary to Sir Morell Mackenzie, who had just published the first volume of his *Manual of Diseases of the Nose and Throat*. Taylor gave him much assistance in the preparation of the second volume, which was acknowledged in the preface, where the author expressed his "deep obligations to Mr. C. L. Taylor for his invaluable help." The second volume was not published until 1884; it is still, we believe, highly esteemed by laryngologists, and Taylor's share in giving to it the qualities as a book of reference which have caused it to survive was large.

Louis Taylor joined the editorial staff of the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL in 1886, and became Assistant Editor in 1897, retaining that position until 1917, when ill health compelled him to resign. Thus for over thirty years he served the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL, accepting increasing responsibilities, and faithfully fulfilling all obligations with unremitting diligence. A great deal of the work, as is inevitable in an editorial office, was of a routine kind, but his vigilance never slept, and from how many pitfalls, for the careless or unskilled, contributors were saved, few of them were aware. It was characteristic of him to detect an error in a name or title, or, with much expenditure of time and patience, to track down a wrong reference, and yet to content himself with an inquiry, half humorous, half sad, as to the reason why scientific writers were so prone to the sin of misquotation. Should, however, an error creep in—and this may happen even with the most vigilant of editorial staffs—he would acknowledge it with his customary good humour, and, in correcting it, perchance have a quiet dig at that chief of offenders, the printer's devil. In course of time he made himself a master of certain subjects which were recurring causes of public controversy. For example, he studied the literature of vaccination and grew familiar alike with every step by which Edward Jenner established his discovery, and with every phase of the controversy provoked by its modern opponents. One result of his